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Motivational Needs of Family and Consumer Sciences Education Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the motivational needs of secondary students enrolled in family and consumer sciences (FCS). The study was based on McClelland's motivational needs theory. Results indicated that FCS students were motivated by the need for achievement more than the need for affiliation and by the need for affiliation more than the need for power. FCS students who became members of Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) had a higher need for affiliation and power than those who were not members.

Introduction

Theories of motivation have been a focus of study throughout the 1900s. In

education, motivation and support are key indicators of success (Bloom, 1985). According to Vallerand, Blais, Briere, and Pelletier (1992), motivation could be perceived as one of the most important psychological concepts in education. However, the relative importance of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is still debated among educators (deCharms, 1976; Deci, 1975), and educators and students differ on whether intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is more important. In the Stanford and Couch (1985) study, Future Homemakers of America/Home Economics Related Occupations (FHA/HERO) advisors and members had different views of what motivated members. Members of FHA/HERO expressed a preference for intrinsic forms of recognition such as respect for others, self satisfaction, and achieving personal goals. On the other hand, FHA/HERO advisors felt that students wanted and responded best to extrinsic rewards such as trophies, plaques, and compliments and praise.

Previous studies of student motivation have been concerned with the factors that educators believe motivated students rather than with the motivational needs as perceived by students (Crump, 1995; Dembrowsky, 1990; Horne, 1991). In contrast, Turner and Herren (1997) addressed the motivational needs of students enrolled in secondary agricultural education classes. They discovered that students enrolled in secondary agricultural education classes were motivated by the need for achievement. Turner and Herren further determined that students enrolled in secondary agricultural education classes who were members of FFA had a greater need for achievement, affiliation, and power than those students who were not FFA members. Like the Turner and Herren study, this study focused on the motivational needs of career and technical education students who were enrolled in family and consumer sciences (FCS) classes.

Family and consumer sciences (until 1993 known as home economics) is a subject area that focuses primarily on the family. Family and Consumer Sciences Education (FCSE) empowers individuals and families to manage the challenges of living and working in a diverse society. The unique focus of FCSE is on the functioning of families and their interrelationships with work, community, and society (Redick, 1998). The recurring, practical problems of individuals and families that are usually interrelated and interdependent are addressed in FCS. In FCS, an integrative approach is used to present the curriculum. This approach helps individuals and families identify, create, and evaluate goals and alternative solutions to significant problems of everyday life and to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions (Redick, 1998). Family and consumer sciences programs are offered in most high schools in America.

An integral part of the FCS program is the youth organization known as Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), formerly Future Homemakers of America/Home Economics Related Occupations (FHA/HERO); the name change was approved during the 1999 national meeting in Boston. Therefore, the current name of the youth organization will be used to report the findings of this study. The mission of FCCLA is to promote personal growth and leadership through FCS. FCCLA focuses primarily on the multiple roles of men and women as family members, wage earners, and community leaders. Activities of this organization help members develop skills in character building, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communication, practical knowledge, and vocational preparation (Vaughn, Vaughn, & Vaughn, 1987).

Enrollment in vocational youth organizations generally (Hannah, 1993) and FCCLA specifically (Nicholson, 1994) has declined or remained stagnant for at

least two decades. Lack of participation in FCCLA could be detrimental to FCS programs. According to Anderson and Wooldridge (1995), FCCLA chapters were a means of giving growth experiences to students as well as improving FCS education programs; the experiences which students encounter through FCS enhance classroom learning (FHA/HERO Chapter Handbook, 1991). Yet, enrollment has declined in some FCS programs, and in order to participate in FCCLA, a student must be currently or previously enrolled in a FCS class. FCCLA and FCS are intricately tied together. Therefore, it was proposed that the needs of students enrolled in FCS education programs be identified and then utilized to increase membership in both FCS and FHA/HERO.

Theoretical Framework

Motivation research in education has centered on goal theories (Brophy, 1983; Ford, 1992; Locke & Latham, 1990) and has a long standing history in studies of psychology. However, goal theories do not really address the issue of what energizes or moves behavior. On the other hand, needs theories are based on the idea that people have different needs, and searching to satisfy those needs is what motivates, energizes, or moves behavior. Needs provide the force for all behavior including perception, thought, and action (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Therefore, a needs-based theory was chosen for this study.

Various theories were examined in understanding the concept of motivation (e.g., Alderfer's ERG - existence, relatedness, and growth - theory, 1972; Herzberg's two factor theory, 1971; Maslow's need hierarchy, 1954; & McClelland's motivational theory, 1987). These theorists tried to answer the basic question of what causes or stimulates behavior by conceptualizing needs or motives that cause people to behave in a certain way. According to some researchers (Chusmir, 1989; Wong & Csikszentmihalyi, 1991), McClelland's three factors of intrinsic motivation are applicable and relevant when studying human behavior. Therefore, the motivational theory developed by McClelland (1987) was selected for the theoretical foundation of this study.

McClelland's (1955, 1984) theory described three different types of motivational needs: (a) the need for achievement (nAch), (b) the need for affiliation (nAff), and (c) the need for power (nPower). McClelland's (1987) theory is based on the belief that most people are motivated toward a certain pattern of behavior by one or a combination of the three needs. Furthermore, his theory suggested that intrinsic motivators are critical for meeting the needs of students because they describe a pattern of how a person may behave.

The nAch is behavior directed toward competition with a standard of excellence. Characteristics of high achievers are (a) a strong desire to assume personal responsibility for performing a task or finding a solution to the problem, (b) a tendency to set moderately difficult goals and take calculated risks, and (c) a strong desire for performance feedback especially in quantitative form. According to McClelland (1987), this need is shaped in part rather early in life by culture and in part by varying techniques of parenting.

The nAff is a desire to establish and maintain friendly and warm relations with other individuals. Characteristics of individuals with a high need for affiliation are (a) a strong desire for approval and reassurance from others, (b) a tendency to conform to the wishes and norms of others when pressured by people whose

friendships they value, and (c) a sincere interest in the feelings of others. Persons with a high nAff are attracted to tasks involving groups (McClelland, 1984). Students with this need would tend to be the peacemakers, the team members, and the social coordinators (McClelland, 1984). These students enjoy the challenge of group work. They want to be accepted by the group so therefore they tend to listen, compromise, and enable a group to move forward.

The final motive in McClelland's (1987) theory is the nPower. This need is explained as the need to control others, to be responsible for them, and to influence their behavior. Characteristics of individuals with a high nPow are (a) a desire to influence and direct somebody else, (b) a desire to exercise control over others, and (c) a concern for maintaining leader-follower relations. People with a high nPower tend to win arguments, persuade others, and seek power positions. McClelland suggested that there are two faces of power. The first face has a negative connotation; one that is concerned with having one's way by controlling and dominating others. The other face of power is called "social" or "institutional." Social or institutional power reflects the process of leadership that uses persuasion and inspiration to help people achieve, to be happy, and to learn. This type of person is one who helps people form and attain goals while not dominating them.

As McClelland's (1987) theory indicates, by identifying the motivational needs of FCS students, their behavior may be predicted. Additionally, examination of motivational needs of students can help structure FCS programs to meet the needs of students while at the same time maintaining membership in FCCLA.

Purpose

The main purpose of this survey study was to determine the motivational needs of students enrolled in FCS programs. A secondary purpose was to determine and compare the motivational needs of FCS students who were members and nonmembers of FHA/HERO. Research questions for this study were:

1. What motivational needs do students enrolled in secondary FCS programs exhibit in relation to nAch, nAff, and nPower?
2. Do differences occur in relation to nAch, nAff, and nPower of students enrolled in FCSE classes?
3. Are there differences between FCCLA members and nonmembers enrolled in FCSE classes in the nAch, nAff, and nPower?

Method

Sample

The target population included all students in Georgia, grades 9-12, enrolled in 207 FCSE programs having a nationally affiliated FCCLA chapter which totaled 7,988 students. Cluster sampling was chosen to identify programs for this study. Twelve schools were randomly chosen with two schools selected from each of the six Georgia Department of Education districts to ensure an adequate sample size. FCSE programs with affiliated FCCLA chapters were sorted according to district then selected through a drawing.

Procedure

Phone calls were made to the 12 program instructors selected in the random drawing to describe the study and request their participation. A cover letter requiring a principal signature, an instruction sheet, and appropriate number of surveys for each class was sent to the school. Instructors received a self-addressed, stamped manila envelope for returning completed surveys. Follow-up phone calls were made to all teachers to thank them for returning the surveys or to remind them to return them as soon as possible. All of the teachers from the 12 schools who were invited to participate administered and returned a total of 1,030 student surveys.

Instrument

The instrument used for measuring motivation needs was developed by Turner (1996) in a study of Agricultural Education students and FFA members. Turner modified the questions from an instrument used by Chusmir (1989). The questions were developed based on the three qualities of achievement, affiliation, and power identified by McClelland (1987). Five statements focused on nAch, nAff, and nPower for a total of 15 statements. An example of a nAch statement is: I try to win as many awards as I can. An example of a nAff statement is: I try to work in a group instead of by myself. An example of a nPower statement is: I tend to organize and direct the activities of others. A 5-point Likert scale was used (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree). Although recent arguments have been established for using Likert-type scales without an undecided choice, Chang (1997) stated that there seems to be little difference in findings as long as the numerical scale is clearly defined and consistent which was the case in this study.

Based on Litwin (1995) and Nunnally (1978) estimations, a score of .70 or higher on the Cronbach's alpha suggests good reliability. In Turner's (1996) study, the instrument had an overall Cronbach's alpha of .82. For this study, the overall instrument showed a Cronbach's alpha score of .78, slightly lower than that of Turner's, but well above the .70 recommended.

Data Analysis

Means and standard deviations for each construct were calculated to determine motivational needs. One-way Analysis and variance (ANOVA) tests were calculated with the level of significance established at .05. Upon finding significance with the omnibus tests, Tukey HSD was completed to adjust for multiple comparisons of the same data.

Findings

On each scale, the three factors were summed to create a composite score ranging from a low of 5 (strongly disagree) to a high of 25 (strongly agree) where 5.0 to 9.00 was strongly disagree, 9.01 to 13.00 was disagree, 13.01 to 17.00 was undecided, 17.01 to 21.00 was agree, and 21.01 to 25.00 was strongly agree. The highest mean was for nAch ($M = 19.09$, agree) and nPower had the lowest mean ($M = 16.91$, undecided) for students enrolled in FCS programs (see Table 1). In the omnibus test, the FCS students expressed a higher nAch than nAff, but a higher nAff than nPower at the .05 level. The nAch represents the students' primary motivational need; however, the other needs were present. The ANOVA found that there were statistically significant differences in the students' nAch, nAff, and nPower. The nAch (Table 1) was significantly greater than the nAff, while the nAff was significantly greater than the nPower.

Family and consumer sciences students were grouped by membership/nonmembership in FCCLA to determine if differences existed in the nAch, nAff, and nPower. As shown in Table 2, the results showed statistically significant differences at the .05 level for nAff and nPower based on FCCLA membership status. Family and consumer sciences students who were members had a higher nAff ($M = 17.77$) and a higher nPower ($M = 16.92$). There was no statistically significant difference in members and nonmembers on the nAch.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Analysis of Variance for Family and Consumer Sciences Students and the Need for Achievement, Affiliation, and Power

Source	M*	SD	df	F	p	Tukey Post Hoc
FCSE Students			2	100.39	.0001	Ach>Aff>P
Motivational Needs			3082			
Achievement (Ach)	9.09	3.35				
Affiliation (Aff)	17.76	3.46				
Power (P)	16.91	3.96				
*Range: 5 low to 25 high						

Table 2

ANOVA for nAch, nAff and nPower of FCS Students Based on FCCLA Membership/Nonmembership

FCCLA Membership	N	M	SD	F	p	Tukey Post Hoc
Achievement						
Member (M)	347	19.23	3.20	1.01	.3145	M=nM
Nonmember (nM)	677	18.90	3.37			
Affiliation						
Member	347	18.26	3.44	11.08	.009	M>nM
Nonmember	677	17.48	3.35			
Power						
Member	347	17.69	3.95	22.39	.0001	M>nM

Nonmember	677	16.45	3.67			
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Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations for Further Research

First, FCS students in this study had a higher nAch and a higher nAff than a nPower. Second, there were statistically significant differences in the nAch, the nAff, and the nPower for FCS students. Third, FCS students who were members of FCCLA had a higher nAff and a higher nPower than FCS students who were not members of FCCLA. Fourth, both FCCLA members and nonmembers had a nAch. From these findings, we concluded that the students in this study who were enrolled in FCSE classes were intrinsically motivated.

According to McClelland's (1987) theory, most people have either one or a combination of the three needs (nAch, nAff, and nPower) which motivate them toward a pattern of behavior; this principle holds true for students enrolled in FCS classes who participated in this study. Findings showed that the three needs (nAch, nAff, and nPower) were present in FCS students. The nAch was the most dominate need for these students; however, they still had a nAff and a nPower.

For this study, achievement was defined as success in relation to an internalized standard of excellence. According to McClelland and Steele (1973), if a student is motivated by the nAch, he/she may enjoy finding solutions to problems, taking moderate risks, competing, and accepting feedback on performances. The nAff was defined as close interpersonal relationships and friendships with other people. McClelland (1987) described affiliation as an activity where a group or team must rely on each other for the outcome. Finally, nPower was defined as a need to control or exercise influence and make decisions (Chusmir, 1989). McClelland described an individual with this need as a leader.

From the findings of this study, we can infer that FCS students are intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation is when a person chooses or undertakes an activity for the feeling of accomplishment of the activity, their interest in the activity, or the enjoyment that the activity provides (Tripathi, 1992). According to Tyler (1976), the needs of learners should be used as a source of determining educational objectives. These writers encourage teachers to provide instructional programs which allows students to fill their nAch, nAff, and/or nPower through the use of various models of teaching.

A model of teaching is a description of a learning environment. Several models of teaching are available to FCS teachers; however, only two models will be identified and recommended for use in meeting the needs of FCS students. To accommodate the motivational needs of students, FCS teachers may use models of nondirective teaching and direct instruction. The nondirective teaching model focuses on facilitating learning. As facilitator, the teacher helps students explore new ideas about their lives, their schoolwork, and their relations with others. The model creates an environment where students and teachers are partners in learning, share ideas openly, and communicate honestly with one another (Joyce & Weil, 2000). On the other hand, direct instruction refers to a pattern of teaching that consists of the teacher's explaining a new concept or skill to a large group of students, having them test their understanding by practicing under teacher direction, and encouraging them to continue to practice under teacher guidance (Joyce & Weil). Individually each model has purposes and features; however, collectively they promote self discipline, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration. It is projected that the

implementation of these models of teaching will help FCS students meet their motivational needs, enhance instruction in FCS classes, and promote participation and growth in FCCLA.

The mean scores for nAch, nAff, and nPower of FCS students indicated that their needs were parallel to the goals and principles of a quality FCSE program with an integral FCCLA chapter. That is, in a quality FCSE program the needs of the students will be emphasized when following state and national standards and the purposes of FCCLA. A quality FCSE program has opportunities for achievement through instructional activities and FCCLA projects. A quality FCSE program provides opportunities for affiliation, hands-on learning in group situations, and integral inclusion or co-curricular approach of FCCLA. Students also have the opportunity to become leaders within the classroom setting as leaders of their groups and/or leaders in classroom FCCLA activities. The findings of this study should provide insight to educators who wish to utilize the models of teaching to meet the motivational needs of students.

Following are several recommendations for further study. First, and most importantly, local instructors should conduct program evaluations to determine whether the instructional program is meeting student motivational needs. Second, the state and national association of FCCLA should continue to conduct research on needs of members to ensure quality programming of the organization. Next, it is recommended that FCS teacher educators work diligently to help prospective FCS teachers understand the benefits of the FCCLA program for in meeting the motivational needs of their future students. Fourth, studies may be conducted in other the career and technical student organizations to determine needs of students in the respective organizations. Lastly, a study of the role of gender, grade level, and/or ethnic background may provide further information and understanding of student motivational needs and student organizations.

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